

VZCZCXRO6416  
RR RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHDA RUEHDF RUEHFL RUEHIK RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHLN  
RUEHLZ RUEHPOD RUEHROV RUEHSR RUEHVK RUEHYG  
DE RUEHLI #1674 1961500  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 141500Z JUL 08  
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON  
TO RHEFHLC/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6928  
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS LISBON 001674

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FOR:US-VISIT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAIR](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PO](#)

SUBJECT: PORTUGAL AIRLINE AGAINST BIODATA COLLECTION BURDEN

11. Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) conveyed to Consul General and PoleconOff the strong concern of the Portuguese flag air carrier TAP about proposed regulations for biometric data collection by airlines under the US-VISIT program. In the July 11 meeting Deputy Director General for Technical and Economic Issues Ricardo Pracana told us TAP is incapable of supporting the costs of this proposed initiative. Pracana claimed the carrier had posted a 100 million euro loss in the first six months of 2008 and is struggling with recent fuel price increases.

12. Comment: Though the invitation for a demarche was unusual, this message appears simply to be the GOP and TAP contribution to the airline industry response to the proposed regulations published in the Federal Register (Reference Docket number DHS-2008-0039), which were closed to comment on June 23. Pracana did not want to speculate as to whether the new regulations, if enacted, would cause TAP to withdraw from the U.S. market entirely but it was clear that both the GOP and TAP are very concerned about the potential extra financial burden the regs would impose at a time of greatly increasing fuel costs.  
STEPHENSON